



15/02/2019

Deputy Martin Heydon,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

PQ 3781/19

To ask the Minister for Health the status of the waiting list for audiology tests nationally and in County Kildare; the waiting times in the different areas; the progress being made on same; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Martin Heydon

Dear Deputy Heydon,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

Obtaining accurate and specific waiting list / activity information for the Audiology Service is currently difficult as there is no functional national clinical management system. This was highlighted in the National Audiology Review Group NARG 2011 and established as a key objective for the HSE Audiology service. I am pleased to announce that the HSE National Audiology Clinical Management System was procured in 2017 and has undergone a successful pilot in 2018 in the Community Audiology Services in Dublin.

A planned roll out of this system is now scheduled for 2019 in community services, followed by acute hospital audiology departments, including the National Cochlear Implant Programme. This will enable accurate recording of all Audiology related aspects of service provision nationally, including referral to assessment and treatment times.

In the interim, reporting is based primarily on manual recording systems and generic data returned to the HSE Business Information Unit (BIU) as part of standard metric returns. The HSE Business Information Unit (BIU) has provided the most recent national summary data for clients waiting treatment in Audiology (Dec 2018) by CHO and age band Appendix 1.

The Audiology service provision for the Kildare population is typically delivered from a soundproof booth located in Naas General Hospital. The facility is fully utilised throughout the working week by community Audiologists delivering care to paediatric and adult service users. Reliance upon service provision in one location in Kildare, limits capacity. Options are being considered to increase capacity and reduce waiting times for assessment and intervention. A recent initiative was implemented whereby adult patients residing in Kildare who would typically have been seen in Naas were offered appointment in Tallaght. This increased capacity of Naas service and brought Naas & Tallaght metrics in line with each other. This current process is underway for paediatric clinics.

Waiting lists are monitored on a regular basis to keep in line with waiting times in Community Audiology services in Tallaght which currently delivers Audiology services across both CHO 6 and 7.

Tables 1 & 2 provide waiting list data specifically related to CHO 7, Kildare service.

**Table 1. Current waiting list data for Naas**

Waiting List Type	Under 3.5 years Diagnostic Assessment	Over 3.5 years Diagnostic Assessment	Adult Referral
Numbers Waiting	124	147	78
Longest Waiter	72 Weeks	53 Weeks	24 Weeks

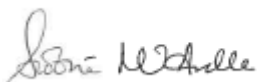
**Table 2. Current waiting list data for Tallaght**

Waiting List Type	Under 3.5 years Diagnostic Assessment	Over 3.5 years Diagnostic Assessment	Adult Referral
Numbers Waiting	97	186	210
Longest Waiter	28 Weeks	20 Weeks	23 Weeks

Options to increase capacity and reduce waiting lists nationally continue to be reviewed by HSE. The HSE is committed to the provision of high quality safe audiology services for children and adults in Kildare and nationwide

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,




---

Siobhán McArdle,  
Head of Operations Primary Care,  
Community Operations